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Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 1834 (2008) of 24 September 2008, by which the Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT) until 15 March 2009 and stated its intention to authorize the deployment of a United Nations military force to follow up the European Union-led military force (EUFOR) in Chad and the Central African Republic, subject to a decision of the Security Council.

2. This report provides an update on developments related to the mandate of MINURCAT since my last report dated 12 September (S/2008/601) and the briefing of my Special Representative to the Council on 19 September (see S/PV.5976). The report outlines preparations, made in close cooperation with the European Union, for the transfer of authority from EUFOR to a United Nations military component, including options on the size, structure and mandate of the proposed United Nations military presence in Chad and the Central African Republic.

II. Update on recent developments

A. Political developments in Chad

3. On 15 September, President Idriss Déby issued a decree, reappointing or reassigning new governors in all 22 regions of the country, and appointing new *préfets* and *secrétaires généraux* in all 60 departments. On 9 October, the President issued a decree, restructuring the territorial administration, including the establishment of four new administrative regions.

4. Some limited progress was made during the reporting period towards the implementation of electoral reforms. The Parliament, which opened its second session on 6 October, received a briefing on the draft bills related to the electoral law and the establishment of the National Electoral Commission as provided for under the agreement of 13 August on electoral reform. The Government has yet to approve and submit the draft bills to the Parliament for its formal consideration.

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5. Efforts to normalize relations between Chad and the Sudan, as provided for in the Dakar Agreement of 13 March 2008, continued. In this context, from 11 to 15 October, an African Union delegation, led by the former President of Burundi, Pierre Buyoya, visited N'Djamena. In meetings with senior officials, including President Déby, the African Union delegation emphasized its support for the Dakar Agreement and urged the Government to fulfil its commitment to re-establish diplomatic relations with the Sudan.

6. In accordance with an agreement reached at a tripartite meeting hosted by the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya in Tripoli, on 22 and 23 October, the Governments of Chad and the Sudan exchanged ambassadors on 9 November.

7. On 15 November, at the conclusion of its meeting in N'Djamena, the Dakar Agreement Contact Group issued a communiqué stating that it had approved an evaluation mission aimed at finalizing the arrangements for the establishment of a peace and security force along the border between Chad and the Sudan. The peace and security force concept provides for the deployment of an observation and monitoring force to commence in January 2009. In addition to the establishment of observer posts, Chad and the Sudan are each to station 1,000 troops at their respective borders.

8. On 17 November, the Joint African Union-United Nations Chief Mediator for Darfur, Djibril Bassolé, met with President Déby in N'Djamena to exchange views on the Darfur crisis and its impact on Chad. With regard to the normalization of relations between Chad and the Sudan, President Déby expressed the hope that agreements reached would now be implemented.

9. As part of a familiarization visit to east Africa, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Alain Le Roy, visited Chad from 13 to 15 October. In his meeting with President Déby, the latter confirmed Chad's acceptance of the deployment of a United Nations follow-on force as envisaged by the Security Council in its resolution 1834 (2008). The President also emphasized the importance of the role of MINURCAT in facilitating the return of refugees and internally displaced persons.

B. Central African Republic

10. In the north-eastern part of the Central African Republic, there were no major political developments related to the mandate of MINURCAT. However, on 8 November, the Sam Oundja refugee camp, with a population of some 3,000 refugees from Darfur, was attacked by an unidentified armed group. Following the incident, EUFOR successfully evacuated nine humanitarian workers to Birao.

C. Security situation

11. The security situation, particularly in eastern Chad, remained unchanged. With the end of the rainy season, the possibility of renewed rebel attacks has increased. Over the last few months, both the Chadian National Armed Forces (FANT) and rebel groups were reported to have strengthened positions on their respective sides of the Chad-Sudan border in anticipation of a possible offensive.

12. In the meantime, the previously reported trend of carjacking, armed robberies and crimes targeting humanitarian workers, Chadian citizens and refugees continued unabated. On 17 September, a group of unidentified armed men forcibly entered the compound of the non-governmental organization (NGO) International Relief and Development, in Goz Beida, and stole property. In the incident, two staff members sustained machete wounds and two guards were injured. The bandits escaped with cash and property. On 27 September, eight men in military uniform reportedly broke into the office of the NGO Solidarités, and stole cash and equipment.

13. Médecins Sans Frontières reported to MINURCAT that on 9 November, a group of unidentified armed men attacked some villages mainly occupied by the Tama ethnic group in the vicinity of the town of Birak, about 60 km south-east of Guéréda. Local authorities confirmed that eight civilians were killed, several others were injured, and some 240 to 300 houses were destroyed.

14. On 15 November, EUFOR reported that two Sudanese MI-24 helicopters had fired upon its road patrol, near Birak in eastern Chad. No casualties were sustained but two EUFOR vehicles were destroyed.

15. The United Nations Mine Action Service confirmed that as a result of conflicts in the 1980s and in recent years, vast quantities of unexploded ordnance and other explosive remnants of war remain scattered across eastern Chad. This continues to pose serious security risks for the population and those working in support of the provision of humanitarian assistance. In this regard, the Mines Advisory Group, which has been working in Abéché and Am Zoer since July 2008, has recorded that 17 persons were killed and another 87 injured by mines and unexploded ordnance in the first six months of 2008. Seventy per cent of the victims were children. In an effort to mitigate the threat, a United Nations mine action team was deployed to MINURCAT headquarters in mid-2008 to coordinate and monitor unexploded ordnance and explosive remnants of War clearance activities.

D. Humanitarian situation

16. Eastern Chad continues to face an acute humanitarian challenge. Over 290,000 Sudanese refugees, more than 180,000 internally displaced persons and a further 700,000 individuals among the host communities are in need of food, water and health care. At present, an estimated 500,000 persons are receiving assistance. Until relative security can be assured, refugees and internally displaced persons are unlikely to return to their places of origin and will continue to depend heavily on external assistance. At the same time, however, the prevalence of attacks by heavily armed bandits targeting humanitarian workers continued to seriously undermine their capacity to reach people in need.

17. In the Am Nabak refugee camp (Wadi Fira region), on 6 October 2008, a group of women forcibly entered an area where staff of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) were registering refugees. The incident degenerated into a violent attack against UNHCR and NGO workers. Gendarmes from the Commission Nationale pour l'Accueil et la Réinsertion des Réfugiés eventually restored order with the help of EUFOR and evacuated the humanitarian workers. To date, the security situation in the camp has precluded their return.

18. Since the 26 July 2008 carjacking attempt involving a staff member of the International Committee of the Red Cross, who was shot and wounded (S/2008/601, para. 16), only essential activities have been maintained in Kerfi, such as the provision of water and health care. A reconciliation process, supported by UNHCR and MINURCAT, began in September between the various communities in Kerfi in an attempt to stabilize the situation.

19. The Consolidated Appeals Process workshop for 2007/08 was held in N'Djamena on 3 and 4 September 2008. Of the US$ 288 million targeted for 2008, to date only 53 per cent has been provided by donors. The significant shortfall will prevent the implementation of numerous projects to address the needs of the most vulnerable. To avert this situation, the Central Emergency Response Fund has injected some US$ 6.5 million to support underfunded projects earmarked in this Consolidated Appeals Process, as other resource mobilization efforts continue.

20. From 21 to 24 November, the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, John Holmes, visited Chad to assess the humanitarian situation and response particularly in eastern Chad. In his meeting with senior Government officials, including Prime Minister Youssouf Saleh Abbas, Mr. Holmes shared his assessment that the situation of the refugees and internally displaced persons was unlikely to be resolved in the immediate future. In stressing that the principle of voluntary returns must be upheld, he advocated the development of strategies aimed at self-sustainability. He further expressed concern over the prevalence of attacks on, and harassment of, humanitarian aid workers.

III. Implementation of the mandate of MINURCAT

21. As at 24 November, MINURCAT was comprised of 863 personnel, including 236 United Nations police officers and 46 military liaison officers. The majority of these personnel are located in N'Djamena (headquarters) and Abéché. Efforts to project the mission's presence in Guéréda, Goz Beida, Farchana and Birao are ongoing. With the aim of enhancing the activities of the Mission in support of its mandate in the east, my Deputy Special Representative recently relocated her office from N'Djamena to Abéché.

A. United Nations Police and the Détachement Intégré de Sécurité

22. During the reporting period, a number of key steps were taken towards the training and deployment of Détachement Intégré de Sécurité (DIS) to locations in eastern Chad. On 27 September, President Déby signed the decree formally establishing DIS. A list appointing 71 DIS commanders and specifying their assignments was presented by the Chadian authorities to MINURCAT on 10 October. Chadian authorities and MINURCAT have agreed on a timetable for the DIS deployment to five key police stations (Abéché, Farchana, Guéréda, Goz Beida and Iriba) and 12 police posts (in close proximity to the 12 UNHCR refugee camps) in eastern Chad. On 16 October 2008, the President signed a second decree appointing the Commander of DIS together with two Deputy Commanders (one in charge of operations and the other in charge of the administration). The first group, comprised of 29 officers, was deployed to Abéché on 24 October. DIS officers now

maintain a presence in Abéché (58), Goz Beida (53), Farchana (51) and Iriba (17). Further deployments are under way.

23. MINURCAT has completed the training of 109 new DIS officers. The graduation ceremony for the new trainees took place on 28 October, in N'Djamena. Allowing for attrition, the total number of trained officers now stands at 418. The next course, for 222 officers, started on 24 November. If suitable candidates are available and the current training schedule is maintained, the target of training 850 DIS officers may be achieved by January 2009.

24. The major logistical challenge affecting the United Nations police and DIS deployment has been the acute shortage of suitable accommodation and infrastructure, and skilled labour to undertake construction work. To date, MINURCAT has constructed four of the five planned police stations for the United Nations police and DIS. At the fifth site, Guéréda, tented office accommodations will be necessary until logistics constraints can be overcome. Generators and 22 DIS vehicles have been deployed to the five locations. Until the accommodation facilities can be secured, it was agreed that DIS officers would make private arrangements to live within the community and receive an additional allowance. Nevertheless, tents have been made available to DIS.

25. A total of 118 United Nations police officers are now stationed in the aforementioned five stations (Abéché (40), Farchana (34), Guéréda (4), Goz Beida (24) and Iriba (16)), and are conducting visits to 11 police posts. Owing to insecurity, travel to the twelfth post, close to the Oure Cassoni refugee camp (north-east of Bahai), has not been possible.

B. Justice and corrections

26. During the reporting period, the Government of Chad appointed 180 new magistrates who are to be deployed throughout the country, predominately in the east. MINURCAT continued its efforts to identify the needs for the justice and corrections institutions. This included the conduct of assessment missions to Farchana, Biltine, and Iriba. A follow-up mission to Iriba was carried out with representatives of the Central Prison Administration to identify areas of urgent intervention. The Mission has continued to provide advice to the Chadian Prison Administration both at the headquarters level, in N'Djamena, and at the local level, in Abéché and Iriba.

27. MINURCAT continued to conduct, in liaison with the Ministry of Justice and with Abéché and Biltine judicial authorities, a comprehensive assessment of the status of the judiciary in eastern Chad. To that effect, MINURCAT has conducted several field missions to Abéché, Goz Beida and Biltine, together with UNHCR.

C. Civil affairs

28. The political and civil affairs presence of MINRUCAT continued to be strengthened. In Kerfi (Dar Sila region), where intercommunal tensions remain high, MINURCAT has sought to promote inter-community dialogue through educational programmes sponsored by UNHCR, the United Nations Children's Fund, the World Food Programme and the Ministry of Education. In Farchana, the limited water

supply remains a source of potential tension. In this regard, MINURCAT has been working with the local community to develop strategies with a view to reducing tensions.

D. Human rights

29. During the reporting period, MINURCAT conducted human rights investigation and monitoring missions to the Oure Cassoni, Am Nabak, Iridimi, Touloum, Farchana Bredjine, Treguine, Gaga and Djabal refugee camps. In addition, MINURCAT staff visited the internally displaced person sites in Koloma and Gourounkoum and several villages and towns, including Hadjer Hadid, Iriba, Biltine, Goz Beida, Toumtouma and Borota. During these visits, MINURCAT staff documented multiple cases of rapes, including two cases involving minors in the Farchana refugee camp. In one of the cases, the alleged assailant was arrested and detained by the gendarmerie. In Goz Beida, the alleged rape of an 8-year-old girl is the subject of an ongoing investigation by the local authorities.

30. A United Nations country team verification exercise to collect and verify reports of child recruitment in eastern Chad commenced its work in August 2008. Within this framework, MINURCAT undertook verification visits to the Oure Cassoni, Iridimi, Bredjine and Treguine refugee camps from 1 to 5 September 2008. The team documented 30 cases of alleged recruitment of child soldiers in the camps, including assertions of the involvement of the Darfur rebel group Justice and Equality Movement.

31. On the basis of these findings, MINURCAT has urged the relevant authorities to conduct investigations and, where appropriate, to take action. MINURCAT, in collaboration with the relevant United Nations agencies and humanitarian actors, continues to urge the local authorities to identify, arrest and prosecute persons alleged to be recruiting or facilitating the recruitment of children in the camps and surrounding villages in eastern Chad.

E. Gender

32. From 6 to 8 October, MINURCAT conducted a workshop on the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence against refugee and internally displaced women, and on Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008). The workshop, opened by the First Lady of Chad, Hinda Déby Itno, brought together 53 representatives, from Government, NGOs, civil society and the United Nations country team. Further to this initiative, on 20 November, MINURCAT organized a train-the-trainers workshop for 52 women in Goz Beida.

33. MINURCAT continued to support efforts to increase representation of female officers within DIS. On 15 September 2008, a MINURCAT training session took place with 50 new female DIS recruits to make them aware of issues involved in providing adequate and appropriate protection of women and children. From 13 to 17 October, the Mission provided a further ten training sessions for the new DIS recruits, which included 71 women.

F. Mission support

34. As noted above, with the construction of four new police stations MINURCAT increased its capacity to deploy and sustain United Nations police and DIS in eastern Chad. Construction of the fifth station and accommodation facilities is ongoing. On 27 November 2008, MINURCAT and the Government of Chad concluded a memorandum of understanding on the premises rehabilitated by MINURCAT for use as DIS police stations and MINURCAT offices. The endorsement of the memorandum of understanding will enable construction of new sites to proceed. At the same time, the Mission continues to devote extensive resources to the planning and preparation for the deployment of a United Nations force.

G. Safety and security

35. During the reporting period, the security phase remained at IV in northern and eastern Chad and III in N'Djamena and southern areas. The security phase in northern and eastern Chad remained at phase IV owing to continued border tensions, banditry and continued risks of criminality that have complicated access to vulnerable populations.

H. Military liaison officers

36. MINURCAT military liaison officers (44 of the 50 authorized strength) continue to liaise with EUFOR in N'Djamena, Abéché, Farchana, Goz Beida, Iriba, Guéréda, and Birao in the Central African Republic. During the reporting period, MINURCAT deployed four military liaison officers to establish a presence in Iriba.

IV. EUFOR deployment

37. At present, 3,300 EUFOR troops are deployed in the area of operation. On 5 November, the European Union High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana, signed an agreement with the Russian Federation, on the deployment of four helicopters and approximately 100 personnel to EUFOR.

38. During the reporting period, EUFOR continued to work closely with MINURCAT. This included the provision of escorts for MINURCAT and DIS convoys. EUFOR continued to conduct patrols, focusing on areas of insecurity to local populations, internally displaced persons, refugees, and humanitarian staff. Visits to 500 villages were undertaken as a means of building confidence among the local population and enhancing security.

V. Expanded MINURCAT presence post-EUFOR

39. In its resolution 1834 (2008), the Security Council requested an update on the planning and preparations for the transfer of authority from EUFOR to a United Nations military force on 15 March 2009, including options on the size, structure and mandate of the proposed military presence in the Central African Republic.

40. For this purpose, a United Nations technical assessment mission (comprising representatives of the Departments of Peacekeeping Operations, Field Support, and Safety and Security, as well as the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, UNHCR, and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and MINURCAT) was deployed to Chad and the Central African Republic from 6 to 13 October. As a result of their assessment and discussions in the field, the proposed plan for the force, as previously presented (S/2008/601, paras. 63-81), has been further refined.

41. In the meantime, consultations are ongoing between the United Nations Secretariat and troop-contributing countries and the Governments of Chad and the Central African Republic, with the purpose of securing the necessary arrangements for the deployment of the United Nations force. In addition, a EUFOR technical team undertook a week-long visit to New York in October to work with the United Nations planning team. It was agreed that such joint planning sessions will continue to be undertaken.

42. On 28 October, the Permanent Representative of Chad to the United Nations, Ahmad Allam-Mi, sent a letter addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2008/679), copied to me, setting out his Government's understanding that the operation to be undertaken by the United Nations force "is not a conventional peacekeeping one implying some kind of 'neutrality', 'impartiality' or 'good offices' within the framework of any type of peace agreement", that the force should not exceed 3,000 troops and that it should be better equipped than EUFOR. Subsequently, the Chadian authorities provided MINURCAT with a memorandum that sought to specify the United Nations force structure and composition and its areas of deployment.

43. In late October, senior representatives of the Departments of Peacekeeping Operations and Field Support held consultations with the Permanent Representative of Chad and with members of the Security Council on the concept for the new force.

44. Senior representatives at Headquarters also visited Chad to further consult the Government of Chad on the future United Nations presence. From 3 to 6 November, the Under-Secretary-General for Field Support, Susanna Malcorra, visited Chad to assess the challenges of MINURCAT deployment, particularly those pertaining to the transition from EUFOR to a United Nations force. In her meetings with senior Government officials, she was advised that discussions on the necessary logistical arrangements, such as site transfers, could proceed only in the context of broader consultations on the concept of operations for the new force.

45. For this reason, the Military Adviser for Peacekeeping Operations, Lieutenant General Chikadibia Obiakor, undertook a visit to Chad from 12 to 14 November to consult the national authorities on the refined concept. Throughout these consultations, Lieutenant General Obiakor sought to address the concerns of the Government.

46. In the course of these consultations the Chadian authorities reiterated the points cited in the above-mentioned letter from the Permanent Representative of Chad. They also expressed concern over the demands that such a force would place on the environment. Further, the Government representatives shared their assessment that the security situation had improved and would continue to do so. In this context, they referred to the recent deployment of additional national forces

along the border with the Sudan and the expectation of the deployment of the peace and security forces.

47. At the end of the consultations, the Chadian authorities indicated a willingness to accept some 3,500 troops. In doing so, they set out their expectations of the force structure including battalion strength, areas of operation and enabling elements. Finally, the authorities expressed their appreciation for the visit of Lieutenant General Obiakor and the expectation that there would be the opportunity for further dialogue. Subsequently, my Special Representative engaged with the Government of Chad and was informed on 18 November that the Government was prepared to accept a United Nations force of not more than 4,500 troops.

48. In my meeting with President Déby in Doha on 29 November 2008, he agreed to the deployment of a United Nations force presence of some 4,900 troops. With regard to the finalization of the relevant judicial and legal agreements, President Déby stressed the need for the technical experts to work together on the details. For this purpose, a United Nations team comprising of experts will travel shortly to N'Djamena.

VI. United Nations force concept of operations

49. The United Nations force design has been based on an analysis of threats and potential spoilers, the terrain, key mandated tasks, and the capabilities of EUFOR and United Nations forces to mandate implementation, as well as on EUFOR lessons learned.

50. Notwithstanding the complex causes of insecurity in the MINURCAT area of operations, on a day-to-day basis, attacks by heavily armed bandits pose the most immediate and constant threat to the civilian population and humanitarian operations. The threat is criminal in nature. It manifests itself, predominately, through the use of military firepower, including heavy weapons. Countering this threat requires more than policing and calls for military deterrence. In cases where this does not succeed, military intervention is required.

51. The proposed force's operational activities would be calibrated towards achieving the objectives of deterring hostilities, reassuring the civilian population, enhancing the delivery of humanitarian assistance, and the implementation of the mandate of MINURCAT, as well as providing protection for United Nations personnel and installations.

52. The extreme challenges posed by the geography, the climate and the fluid security situation demand a highly mobile and responsive force. The proposed United Nations force would provide a robust and effective security presence, one that projects deterrence through visibility and presence both on land and in the air.

53. This would entail a force capable of conducting 24 security patrols daily across the area of operations, supported by a battalion size mobile reserve force able to provide a surge capacity in response to an emerging threat.

54. In comparison with EUFOR, the proposed United Nations force would have a larger operational area and additional responsibilities. The latter entails the provision of an enabling security environment in which the recently commenced deployment of lightly armed DIS can operate.

55. As with EUFOR, in addition to an air mobile troop-carrying capability, any United Nations force requires sufficient military engineering and communications resources. Unlike EUFOR, it is further anticipated that the United Nations force presence will continue over the next year and beyond. Accordingly, such a force would require the establishment of enduring logistical support, in particular facilities for accommodation, sanitation and water. Until the necessary logistical structures can be put in place, infantry battalions would need to be deployed on a self-sustaining arrangement for the initial 12-month period. Within each battalion there would need to be a light field engineering capacity.

56. The United Nations would need to discuss with Member States the contribution, on a bilateral basis, of an in extremis commitment to mitigate developing crises. The purpose of such support would be for ensuring the safety and security of United Nations personnel and assets in the event the United Nations force is unable to cope with the situation.

A. United Nations force in Chad

57. The concept for the United Nations force as previously presented (S/2008/601, paras. 63-81) comprising some 6,000 troops has been further refined. Possible reductions have been identified that would provide for a force of some 4,900 troops. In developing this concept, careful consideration has been given to the continued concerns expressed by the Government of Chad. (The proposals for the force presence in the Central African Republic are outlined separately in paras. 63-64 below.)

58. The force would be configured to have an enduring presence in six sites of half a battalion each (initially at Iriba, Guéréda, Farchana, Goz Beida and later at Bahai and Koukou-Goz Amer). This would entail battalions of the standard United Nations strength of 800 troops, and a battalion-size mobile reserve supported by 18 helicopters.

59. The refined force concept reflects adjustments to the helicopter support troops, signals units, special forces and reconnaissance units, as well as some logistical elements. They are deemed operationally achievable, although not ideal, as they reduce the logistical support and enablers to the minimum. Any further reduction in the force would significantly impact on its effectiveness and situational awareness.

60. The force's ability to sustain operations in a period of crises would depend on the contribution of troops that are not subject to national caveats. It would depend, among other elements, on the rapid response reserve being deployed and operational in the early stages of the transition.

61. With the plan to establish sites in Bahai and in the vicinity of Koukou-Goz Amer, as well as a presence in the Central African Republic, the United Nations force would generate an increased demand for air assets for operations and logistics support.

B. Central African Republic

62. The current activities of EUFOR in the Central African Republic are limited to securing the Birao airfield and the conduct of patrols in and around its immediate

vicinity. The above-mentioned United Nations technical assessment mission visited Bangui and Birao on 10 and 11 October, and met with representatives of the Government of the Central African Republic, EUFOR, MINURCAT, the United Nations country team and the humanitarian community. On the basis of those discussions, it was assessed that the main security threats were in the north-west and south-east of the country. While cross-border activity by armed elements in the north-east cannot be ruled out, the team did not assess that there were enduring and significant threats in the area. In response to the specific request of the Security Council that the United Nations establish a military presence in north-eastern Central African Republic to follow on from EUFOR, the main options considered were as follows:

(a) **Option 1**: A small military detachment to liaise with local authorities and key actors, maintain limited situational awareness and assess the condition of the Birao airfield and determine maintenance requirements. This option entails a small military liaison team of approximately 15 officers (based in Chad) that will conduct routine visits to Birao;

(b) **Option 2**: A military detachment to provide force protection for one consolidated site, project limited longer range patrols within the area of operations, maintain a quick reaction force, and undertake air field maintenance. This option entails a reinforced detachment consisting of two manoeuvre Companies and one enabling support Company, plus a small military aviation section (some 500 troops, all ranks);

(c) **Option 3**: A force that can project deterrent and reconnaissance patrols in the area of operations (out to 350 km), maintain a quick reaction capability, maintain and secure the Birao airstrip, and provide force protection for one consolidated site. This option entails a manoeuvre motorized infantry battalion task force, with organic air mobility, a horizontal engineer section, and trauma surgical medical capabilities (some 1,000 troops, all ranks).

63. In the light of the technical mission's assessment of the prevailing risks, reinforced by EUFOR's current tasking, the recommended military presence is option 1. Should a sustained presence be required, or the prevailing conditions and threat change, option 2 is considered to provide the best balance of operational presence, situational awareness and resource allocation.

VII. Force generation and military planning

64. On 19 September, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations briefed potential troop- and police-contributing countries on the initial concept of operations for the Mission. This was followed by a more detailed briefing on military and support concepts to potential troop-contributing countries on 2 October and an informal meeting of troop-contributing countries on 25 November. Subsequently, notes verbales soliciting commitments of troops and resources to a United Nations force in Chad and the Central African Republic, subject to a Security Council mandate, were sent to potential troop contributors during the first week of November.

65. To date, 16 countries have indicated a willingness to positively consider contributing to a MINURCAT force. One potential contributor has indicated the

possibility of contributing to the helicopter requirement. A number of other potential contributors have indicated that, while they could provide troops, specific commitments would depend on prior confirmation that the key enablers have been secured.

66. All efforts are being made to ensure that there is not a security vacuum during the transition. To this end, my staff are working closely with EUFOR contributors to secure the maximum number of troops committed to re-hat.

67. The United Nations is presently recruiting the core force Headquarters staff, which would be based at the Secretariat to refine operational plans. They would then deploy to the force headquarters in Chad in early 2009. The sector battalions and reserve force, as well as the requisite logistic support, transport, medical and aviation capabilities, will need to be in place in Abéché during the early stage of the transition. This will depend on the United Nations receiving commitments for sufficient troops and assets.

VIII. Arrangements for a MINURCAT post-EUFOR presence

68. In my previous report (S/2008/601, para. 79), I stated that for a seamless transition to occur, an agreement with the Government of Chad on the transfer and use of the EUFOR sites to the United Nations, together with infrastructure and water drilling rights, will be required prior to the transfer of authority. A draft memorandum of understanding formalizing the agreement between the United Nations and the Government of Chad on the handover of the use of all EUFOR sites to MINURCAT is being prepared.

69. Following the transfer of authority on 15 March 2009, the United Nations force will progressively build up with new troop contributors. Subject to the decision of the Security Council, a presence in Birao will also be established. Deployments of troops and equipment will be severely constrained during the rainy season. The full force strength will be achieved only after October 2009.

IX. Benchmarks for withdrawal of MINURCAT

70. In consultation with the Headquarters Integrated Mission Task Force, including the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the United Nations Development Programme, UNHCR and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, as well as MINURCAT, the following benchmarks have been developed towards the exit strategy of MINURCAT:

(a) Voluntary return and resettlement in secure conditions of a critical mass of internally displaced persons;

(b) Demilitarization of refugee and internally displaced person camps as evidenced by a decrease in arms, violence and human rights abuses;

(c) Capacity of local authorities to provide the necessary security for refugees, internally displaced persons, civilians and humanitarian workers;

(d) Ability of the national law enforcement agencies to maintain law and order with respect for international human rights standards;

(e) Progress of an independent and effective judiciary in eastern Chad contributing to end impunity, as evidenced by a significant increase in the capacity and independence of, and respect for, the justice sector;

(f) A strengthened prison system in eastern Chad that is based on a human rights approach to prison management.

71. These benchmarks will be reviewed as the situation evolves and will form the basis of the Mission's implementation plan.

X. Observations and recommendations

72. The recent steps taken by the Governments of Chad and the Sudan towards normalizing their relations, including the re-establishment of diplomatic relations, signals their intent to address the sources of instability regionally. These are positive steps that need to be consolidated so that stability in the region may be restored and the lives of those affected will no longer be at risk.

73. It remains the responsibility of the Governments of Chad and the Sudan to ensure that their respective territories are not used to harbour armed opposition groups. In this regard, I applaud the commitment of the Government of Chad to negotiate an end to the conflict and call on the leadership of the Chadian armed opposition groups to lay down their arms and address their grievances through political forums.

74. I wish to acknowledge the key role that the Government of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya continues to play in facilitating the dialogue between the concerned parties. Should these efforts require the assistance of the United Nations, my good offices remain open.

75. With regard to the efforts of the Chadian people to establish a viable democratic system of governance, the adoption of legislation on electoral reforms will signal the resolve of the Government to an inclusive process. The full implementation of the agreement of 13 August will require sustained commitment from all the parties and key stakeholders. I am grateful for the support provided to them by the European Commission and United Nations country team.

76. These efforts will not, however, bear fruit in the long term unless the two critical issues of impunity and the armed opposition are comprehensively addressed. The Government of Chad is encouraged to take a strong stand in ending impunity for criminal actions.

77. Technical support for efforts to strengthen the rule of law in accordance with international human rights conventions will need to be sustained. In this regard, the level of cooperation between the Government of Chad with MINURCAT and the United Nations country team and the ongoing commitment of donors are encouraging.

78. Donors have been generous in their support to the MINURCAT managed trust fund. To date, donors have pledged US$ 21.6 million of which US$ 18 million has been received. This has enabled MINURCAT to facilitate the DIS programme. Based on the current rate of spending for the DIS programme, it is projected that the trust fund will be exhausted by the first quarter of 2009. MINURCAT is working closely with the European Union and other donors towards the holding of a donors'

conference in Brussels early in 2009. This will include an overall assessment of the DIS programme and should consider the proposal made by the Government of Chad that the overall number of DIS personnel be doubled. I would encourage donors to continue to provide the necessary support to the trust fund.

79. Until the situation at the border can be stabilized and the rule of law established, the majority of the refugee and internally displaced person populations in eastern Chad will continue to require humanitarian assistance. Reports of ongoing recruitment of child soldiers and the existence of arms and armed men in refugee camps and internally displaced person sites in the region are particularly disturbing. I also remain deeply concerned over the continued threat to humanitarian workers, who have been forced in some cases to close down their operations. I admire the dedication and commitment of humanitarian workers who risk their lives to ensure that basic life support assistance is provided to vulnerable groups.

80. Over the last year, EUFOR has facilitated the conditions under which such assistance can be delivered. With the EUFOR mandate coming to an end on 15 March 2009, the United Nations has developed and further refined a concept of operations for the follow-on United Nations force.

81. This concept is premised on the same mandate as EUFOR. Given the enduring nature of the new force's deployment and the considerable logistical requirements, my experts have concluded that the minimum requirement for the force is some 4,900 troops.

82. Timely provision of key enablers and the maximum re-hatting of EUFOR troops will facilitate a smooth transition to be effected. The operational capability of such a force will depend on its ability to enjoy full freedom of movement and to be perceived as impartial.

83. I welcome the Government of Chad's agreement to the concept for the United Nations force of 4,900 troops. In this context, I wish to acknowledge the constructive spirit of dialogue that the United Nations has enjoyed in its dialogue with the Government of Chad, in particular with President Déby, his Minister of External Relations and the leadership of the Coordination Nationale d'Appui à la Force Internationale.

84. I welcome the spirit in which the Government of Chad has recently concluded the memorandum of understanding with the United Nations on premises rehabilitated by MINURCAT for use by DIS police stations and MINURCAT offices. This is encouraging in view of the requirement for the timely conclusion of the agreements upon which the deployment of the United Nations force will be contingent. Equally, prior to the deployment of the new force, it will be necessary to finalize the status-of-forces agreement and the memorandum of understanding transferring all sites and infrastructure currently utilized by EUFOR to the United Nations.

85. I encourage all Member States, particularly those already participating in EUFOR, to contribute to the new force the necessary troops and support elements. Critical elements include a level II hospital and air assets.

86. With regard to the request of the Security Council for options on the Central African Republic, the Government of the Central African Republic has been consulted and has indicated a willingness to accept a United Nations force presence

in the north-east of the country. In that spirit, I have proposed three options for a United Nations force.

87. On this basis I submit to the Security Council for its consideration and authorization the proposals contained in section VI above, as they relate to a United Nations force presence in Chad and north-eastern Central African Republic.

88. In connection with the development of a concept that supports a smooth transition between EUFOR and the United Nations, I would like to express appreciation for the continuing cooperation of the European Union and the EUFOR Operational Commander, General Patrick Nash.

89. In conclusion, I would like to pay tribute to my Special Representative, Victor Angelo, and to the dedication demonstrated by the men and women of MINURCAT, the United Nations country team, the humanitarian community and EUFOR in their efforts to contribute to peace, security and development in Chad and north-eastern Central African Republic.

MINURCAT
Planned Deployment
as of November 2008
Area of operation
International boundary
Provincial boundary
National capital
Provincial capital
Town, village
Refugee camp
Internally displaced persons camp (IDP)
The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.
N'Djamena Deployment
HQ
FHQ Support
Reserve
Recon
SF
MP
LOG
Level 2
Mr-Con
BORKOU-ENNEDI-TIBESTI
WADI FIRA
NORTHERN DARFUR
SUDAN
BATHA
OUADDAI
WESTERN DARFUR
CHAD
SILA
GUERA
SALAMAT
MOYEN-CHARI
SOUTHERN DARFUR
YAKAGA
BAMINGUI-BANGORAN
CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC
Fada
Berdoba
Bahai
Teriba
Iriba
Tina
Am Nabak
Guéréda
Kulbus
Am-Zoer
Abeche
Biltine
Farchana
Andé
El Geneina
Al Sireaf
Oum Hadjer
Ati
Chokoyan
Koundjoubay
Masteri
Satay
Mornei
Zalingei
Nertiti
Am Dam
Am Gereda
Kango Haraza
Habila
Am Charamit
Ade
Garsila
Makokou
Goz Beida
For Baranga
Mongo
Nyala
Mukjar
Koukou Angarana
Teddji
Gabasour
Abu Déia
Rehed al Bardi
Melfi
Am Timan
Nyimeri
Tulus
Zakouma
Tissi
Am Dafok
Birao
Haraze
Manou
Campement de Grounda
Duanda Djallé
Campement de Koumbala
Ouandjia
Kaouadja
0 100 200 300 km
0 100 200 mi
Map No. 4349 UNITED NATIONS
December 2008
Department of Field Support
Cartographic Section